

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MONTEV 00429 021316Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3122

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0429

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, AR, UY
SUBJ: TRANSFER OF ARGENTINE F-86S TO URUGUAY

REF: (A) STATE 015032, (B) MONTEVIDEO 0308, (C) STATE 022021

1. I FULLY APPRECIATE THAT A POLITICAL DECISION MAY REQUIRE CHOOSING BETWEEN RELATIVE PRIORITIES RATHER THAN EQUITIES, AND I RECOGNIZE IMPORTANCE OF THE MANIFESTLY GREATER INTERESTS INVOLVED IN ARGENTINA AND THE ATTITUDES PREVAILING IN CONGRESS. IT IS UNFORTUNATE, HOWEVER, THAT BY APPLICATION OF SUCH A DOUBLE STANDARD A SMALL COUNTRY MUST BEAR THE ADVERSE WEIGHT OF A DECISION DESIGNED TO PROTECT INTERESTS IN A LARGER ONE, AND OUR RELATIONS WITH IT WILL SUFFER CORRESPONDINGLY.

2. GIVEN THE DECISION, I WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE SO THAT WE MIGHT, WHEN ASKED, PARALLEL HERE THE EXPLANATION OF IT WHICH THE DEPARTMENT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CALLED UPON BY URUGUAYANS TO MAKE. AS STATED IN MVD 0308,OTE THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER TO EXPLAIN THIS FRANKLY ON THE POLITICAL GROUNDS WHICH MOTIVATED IT, GIVING SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO THE NEED TO AVOID AFFORDING GROUNDS FOR PROVOKING EVEN HARSHER KOCH-TYPE ACTION, THAN TO PRESENT IT AS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT OF THE KOCH AMENDMENT AS IT EXISTS. AS THIS LEGAL REQUIREMENT IS OUTLINED IN PARAS 3 AND 4 OF STATE 015032, WE THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT IT WILL IMPRESS LEGALISTIC
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URUGUAYANS EVEN THOUGH THEY RECOGNIZEIT IS UP TO US TO INTERPRET OUR OWN LAWS. ON THE OTHER HAND, I BELIEVE THEY COULD SEE MERIT IN THE FRANKLY

POLITICAL EXPLANATION EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD NOT LIKE IT AND ITS RESULT. IN THIS REGARD, I REFER TO OUR VIEWS AS EXPRESSED IN PARAS 6 AND 7 OF MVD 0308. AS I EXPECT TO BE SEEING THE FOREIGN MINISTER NEXT WEEK, BY WHICH TIME I

ASSUME THEY WILL HAVE LEARNED OF THIS DECISION, I WOULD APPRECIATE THE REQUESTED GUIDANCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. RE PARA 3 OF REFTTEL (C), I CAN ONLY RESPECTFULLY REPEAT MY OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE THATSUCH AN IMPORTANT DECISION WAS MADE WITHOUT EVEN ASKING FOR THIS EMBASSY'S VIEW. THE EXPLANATION THAT THE DEPARTMENT TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE CASE IT BELIEVED I WOULD HAVE MADE HAD I BEEN CONSULTED (WHICH MY CABLE THEN CONFIRMED) I FIND ONLY IRONIC. I AM SURE OTHER AMBASSADORS WOULD AS WELL.

4. I WISH HERE TO REPEAT THE RECOMMENDATION I MADE IN PARA 10 OF MVD 0308, AND AGAIN MORE EXTENSIVELY IN MY OVERVIEW STATEMENT (MVD 0341), OF THE URGENT NEED FOR A THOROUGH REVIEW AT THIS TIME OF OUR RELATIONS WITH URUGUAY, AND ESPECIALLY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM HERE. THE APPARENT ACCEPTANCE AS OVERRIDING BY THE DEPARTMENT OF "CONGRESSIONAL OPPROBRIUM OF URUGUAY", WHICH ATTITUDE WE VIEW AS NOT JUSTIFIED BY THE FACTS, FOR REASONS STATED IN PARAS 3, 4 AND 5 OF MVD 0308 AND MUCH MORE EXTENSIVELY IN OTHER EMBASSY REPORTING, UNDERLINES THE NEED, IN THIS EMBASSY'S VIEW, FOR SUCH A REVIEW.
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